



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

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Environmental NEWS RELEASE



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US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KALAMAZOO RIVER CLEANUP DELAYED; ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY INPUT PLANNED

CHICAGO (April 13, 2007) — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 today announced it would delay until May 5 the start of Superfund cleanup activity at the Plainwell Dam, in Plainwell, Mich.

Over the next several weeks, EPA, in consultation with Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, will seek community input on plans to dispose of PCB-contaminated sediment excavated from the Kalamazoo River at the Allied Paper landfill in Kalamazoo.

"Kalamazoo Mayor McKinney and other elected officials and residents have made it clear that they have concerns and need more information about the sediment disposal plans," said Regional Administrator Mary Gade. "We are fully confident that the cleanup and disposal approach announced on February 28th is safe and effective, and will bring momentum to cleanup of the entire 80-mile river system. But we also recognize the need to take additional steps to earn the community's confidence."

Additional measures could include enhanced monitoring, frequent community updates and other steps. EPA and MDEQ officials will meet with Kalamazoo officials next week, with additional community outreach efforts to follow. The agencies are not considering alternative sediment disposal plans.

"QUOTE HERE," said MDEQ Commissioner Steve Chester. "MORE COMMENT HERE."

While all significant work on the river cleanup will be halted, over the next several days Plainwell and Kalamazoo residents may see contractor crews taking steps to stabilize current pre-construction activity.

On February 28th, EPA and its partner agencies announced a pair of agreements with two of the companies potentially responsible for cleanup along the 80-mile Kalamazoo River Superfund site. Georgia-Pacific and Millennium Holdings agreed to perform a \$21 million cleanup of the Plainwell Impoundment Area, including a portion of the Plainwell Dam. The companies also agreed to perform about \$15 million in additional environmental sampling and investigation throughout the Kalamazoo River Superfund site.

More information about the Allied Paper/Portage Creek/Kalamazoo River Superfund site may be found at www.epa.gov/region5/sites/kalproject/.

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